

TO THE
HONOURABLE
THE
Knights, Citizens, and Burgesses, now assembled in
PARLIAMENT.

THE HUMBLE
PROPOSITIONS

OF
WILLIAM BALL, alias BENNET, Gent.

Concerning the Forts of this King-
dome. With some other Considerations of State.



Printed Anno Domini 1641.

George Chamonde

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TO THE
HOMONIPIA

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THE HUMBOLDTS

Propositions

30

WILLIAM SALLIE BENNETT

Commissioning the course of sky
which I will now describe (particulars of series)

~~2. Summary~~



TO
THE R I G H T
WORSHIPFUL
M^{r.} SPEAKER.

RIGHT WORSHIPFUL;

Your owne readie worth hath ever deserved those
due Respects from mee, which I have (as obli-
ged therunto) formerly tended unto you;
Now the eminence of your Place may command
me humble service: which (according to my ability) I shall
be ever ready (as in duty bound) to render at your pleasure.
In token whereof, I have attempted to dedicate these Pro-
positions, chiefly to your Worship, to whom they may most
fitly have Relation, as being a principall Member of the
great, and happy Representative Body of this most flouri-
shing Kingdome, now assembled in Parliament. For the
generall good, and safety whereof, I have express^t, & set

forth these, though meane, yet my well-meaning Endeavours, being ever ready to endeavour more, as my much Honour'd Superiours shall please to command, and direct me, and God permit me. Whose divine Providence, and Goodnesse, I shall ever implore, for the happy successe of all publick affaires, and great Designes important to this Nation, and remaine always

Your Worships

Servant to
command

WILLIAM BALL;
alias BENNET.



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*The humble Propositions of William Ball, alias
Bennet, Gent. Concerning the Forts of this King-
dome, with some other Considerations
of STATE.*

L.



Orasmuch, as all men as well
Inferiours, as Superiours, are
by the Lawes, both of God
and Nature; as also by Con-
stitutions, Civill, and Mili-
tary (grounded upon Reason,
and

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and Honour) bound to conserve, as much as
in them lyeth, their native Country; in which
they receive the life of Men, and enjoy the liber-
ty of Free men; the most especiall benefits
(speaking morally) of this *Lower world*: every one
therefore is, not to hide his Talent in the
ground, but liberally to proffer, for the generall
good of his Country, what store soever he pos-
sesseth, or enjoyeth, whether or no, it be the en-
dowment of Nature, or Fortune: so that per-
sons in Authority, are to procure their Coun-
tries well-fare by their well-ordered, and dis-
creet Commands, and Government, *Souldiers by*
their valour, and Discipline, the rich by their
wealth, learned and experienced men by their know-
ledge and observation, Inferiours by prompt obedi-
ence, all by good-will. To expose these assertions to
approbation, I conceive no Author need to be ci-
ted, the *Dictamen* of reason averring them to be
so, wherefore I cannot doubt, that much Honour-
red Superiours (to whose grave censure I sub-
mit these my *Propositions*) will any way be offend-
ed, that I have Dedicated to them these subse-
quent Considerations, proceeding if not from
sufficient reason, yet from intire good-will; so
that if I have inserted any one clause, that may
give the least distaste; I humbly intreat, that

— *quis enim succenseret amanti?* may excuse it.
Ovid Epist. Her Helen. &c.

2. The

THE most Politicke- and martiall men have generally esteemed Forts, and strong places, the safety not onely of meane Provinces, but even of the greatest, and most puissant Kingdomes and Empires, the defects, and neglects whereof have many (too many) times beene the occasions or rather causes of most irreparable Disasters, in greatest and commanding Monarchies, and Estates. The Romane Empire invaded by the *Perſians, Saracens, Goths and Vandalls*, the *Greeke Empire* wholly subverted by the *Turks*; *Spane* overrunne by the *Moores* (with other Countries) were heretofore most lamentable Presidents of thralldome occasioned chiefly (according to humane principles of State) by noe having their frontiers & ploces of importance strongly fortifiſed: But to instance provinces, and ſome part more neere, and notiſied unto us in these moderne times, who knoweth not but that the ſmall remnant of *Hungaria*, the ſtates of *Venice* and *Holland*, the Islands of *Sicily, Sardinia, Candy and Milta*, I even all *Italy*, are all principally conſerved (ſpeaking of the iuſtmentall cause) from forreigne ſubjection and tyranny by ſortan d ſtrong places.

Moreover the most flourishing Kingdomes and Monarchies, both Christian and Mahometan, disdaine not, but rather wholy endeavour to have the bounds and borders of their dominions, if not extraordinarily, yet sufficiently strengthned with fortifications and Garrisons both in peace and war: so do the *Roman* or *German* Emperour, and *Great Turk* notwithstanding of late the ordinary peace or Truce betweene them, keepe the one the forts (or rather Townes) of *Kamorra, Rab* &c. the other of *Strigonium, Buda* &c. exactly maintained with all necessaries; thereby wiesly preventing the sudden events of war, if their enemies (albeit they make shew of peace) should upon any distast, or occasion of advantage given them, attempt an invasion: For such places of strength, although they are not always swords (which sometimes they are) to cut off an enemy, yet are they ever Bucklers to defend a Countrie, untill such time, as either sufficient power can be aised to expell them; or that reasonable conditions be obtained, ifsoe that the enemy bee not inviugible in respect of number.

4. Nor can I, but commend in this point of fortifying (to omit the *Hollanders* of all our neighbor nations most carefull) the *French* and *Spanish*, but especially the *French*: who, although they need not greatly feare, or at leastwise tremble at any forraine Invasion from their neighbors by Sea, which could impose the yoke of sujection upon them; by reason of their great, and united Land-forces, they are able to make, to expell, and vanquish any such powers, as could by *Shipping*, *Gallies*, and the like, enter into their continent, yet have they on the *Levant*, & great *Ocean Seas*, strong townes, and Castles well furnished with good *Garrisons*, and necessary provision for defence, against a puissant Invader: as to begin on the *Levant in France*, *Tolou*, *Marseilles*, *Narbon in Spain*, *Barcelona*, *Denia*, *Alicante*, *Cartagena de Levanto*, *Malaga*, *Gibraltar*, *Cadiz*, *the Groine*, *St. Sebastians*, *Fonte-Rabia*; and againe in *France*, *Baion*, *Blois sur Garroun*, *Broige*, *Rochel quondam*, *Brest*, *St. Malos*, *Mount St. Michael*, *Grandvill*, *Cherbourg*, *Haure-de Grace*, *Diepe*, *Cales*, &c, so that the consideration of these aforesnamed places of importance, strongly erected, and warily kept, and repaired by those, and other our neighbouring Nations; have divers times moved me to ponder, whether their care in maintaining such Fortifications, or our confidence in omitting them, and, as it were, quiting the charge thereof, may be more commendable?

5. First, therefore (not to flatter our selves) I conceive, that it must be granted, that none of our best Sea-townes, or Castles, of *Barmick*, *Hull*, *Tarmouth*,

Harwich, Sandon, Dover, Portsmouth, Plymouth, &c. are (as they now are contrived, and strengthened) to be compared with most of those in *France*, and *Spaine*, aforesaid: For although the situation of some of ours, may be as convenient as some of theirs; yet our manner of fortifying is not to be equalized with theirs; considering their strong walls and Parapets, *Bulwarkes, Halfe-mooones, Horne-workes, Toris, Moots, Ditches, Rampiers*, and in some places *Redouts*, and *Sconces*; as in the *Low-Countries*: and what I conceive to be more worthy of consideration, and more to be looked into; many places of importance in this Kingdome, are in a manner without any Fortification at all; or else so weakly maintained, or ill composed, that in time of warre (especially with the French our overseeing neighbors) they lye greatly (according to the Nature, and martiall Discipline of these dayes) exposed to danger,

6. For to instance, *Milford Haven* is a place of that situation, and convenience; that a great Navie, even the greatest (almost for burden, howsoever for number) may arrive there; and being arrived, land what numbers they shall be able without any their eminent, or great danger, there being no place of strength to molest or hinder them, nor a people of any considerable power (although they want no courage) to resist them: and may not an Army out of *Spaine*, or *France* (now more to be thought of) not onely there land, but also there fortifie themselves, wasting, and destroying the *Countries* of *Pembroke-shire, Carmarden-shire, Glamorgan-shire, and Cardi-*

gar-

gar shire, before sufficient forces could be raised to resist them, and enforce them to desist? May not great powers likewise, not onely spoyle us, as before said; but also invade the heart of the Kingdome from thence, and that with much convenience to themselves, and inconvenience to us, for having so large, and safe an Haven (as is Milford-haven) for their fleet, if it should be by them well fortifyed, and kept (as that no doubt but they would doe) might they not march along the Sea Coast through the plentifull Countries of Pembroke-shire, Carmarden-shire, and Clamorgan-shire aforesaid, and from thence into Monmouth shire, Herefordshire, and so farther according to their Potencie? Which how dangerous it might prove (God of his goodnesse defend it) not onely to the ruine of those Countries, but also disanimating of our people living in, or about them; to the incensing of *Domesticall discontented factions* (if any such should be) with other like Casualties. I leave it to the Consideration of my Superiours.

7 Moreover, not Milford Haven onely, lying upon large, and commodious Seas, and being likewise so situated, as that it may annoy (if once in the hands of a stranger) Ireland, as well as England, and greatly disunite them, or at leastwise molest their union; not onely that, I say, but also to omit the mouth of the River of Carmarden, Swanze, Cardiffe, Newport, and Chepstow, or rather the mouth of the River of Wye in Monmouth-shire, the mouth of Severn, Kingrode, Mynhead, and some other places in the Severn-Sea;

the Isle of Sheppey in Kent, the mouth of Thames, and *Tinmouth Castle* have need (in respect of future Casualties) to be better looked unto, and strengthened: as likewise the towns of *Poole*, *Weymouth*, and *Portland Iland* in *Dorset shire*, are (in my small insight) to be farre better fortifyed then they are. For first, *Dorset shire* is the nearest Country unto *France* (*Kent* onely excepted) of any part of *England*; next, it is by nature least strong, as lying wholly upon the Sea, having no difficult Clifffes, or Rockes to incumber an enemy in *landing*. Thirdly, it lyeth in the midst of the *Southerne Coast*, having *Eastward Hampshire*, *Sussex*, and *Kent*; *Westward Devonshire*, and *Cornwall*; and *Northward* the body of the Kingdome: so that if a poren enemy should stand there, hee might direct his forces *Eastward*, *Westward*, or *Northward*; according to his most advantage: as for the Castles of *Weymouth*, and *Portland Iland*, they are not for strength considerable; and yet who knoweth not, but that that Iland, and the land of the County, make a large Bay sufficient to containe a great Navie, where likewise they may ride at Anchor in reasonable safety, unlesse the South, or Southeast winds be extraordinarily stirring; so that, if that *Iland* (let it seeme of what importance it please) should be but taken, and well fortifyed by the *French* (besides the charge and hazzard of recovering it, or blocking it up) they might shrewdly annoy us, having *Normandy* so neare.

8 And for that I have intimated the *French*, it may be thought either hate, or aversion (without fun-

fundamentall reason) if I shew not some prudent, or at leastwise, probable cause of suspition in that Nation againt us ; wherefore, I have here briefly set down the particulars, which I conceive of the *French* proceedings, and greatnessse. First, therefore it is well knowne that *France* is the greatest, most plentifull, and populous Kingdome in *Europe*, being at the least foure times bigger then *England*, and having 5 times as many people. The King thereof is now the most absolute *Monarch Christian* (except the great *Duke of Moscovie*, or *Emperour of the Abessines*, whom we scarcely know) so that the King of *France*, his *Sic volumus, sic jubemus*, is in a manner a Law amongst the greatest part of his Subjects ; and thereby hee hath of late so augmented his Revenues, that those of *France* alone, exceed the Incomes of all the large Donions of *Spaine*, and *Portugall* ; or at the least wise, they equalize them : besides, *France* hath extended it selfe of late, through *Lorraine*, and in *Artois*, and *Alsatia*, Lording as it were over *Savoy*, and *Piemont*: the *Marquisate of Montferrat*, and *Dutchy of Mantua in Italy*, are likewise under the protection of *France*: but that which of all things ought most to awake vs, is the *French Conquest in Artois*, aforesaid, so neare unto us, and neerely concerning us, as I take it : the Proverbe is,

Tunc tua res agitur, paries cum proximus ardet.

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And

And is not our neighbors house on fire in the Provinces of *Flanders*, are not *Arras*, *Aires*, and *Hesden* by the *French* taken in? for my part were *St. Omers*, *Graveling*, and *Dunkerk* by them likewise subdued, I should account that house burnt down to the ground; and were the *French* once but Masters of *Flanders*, I would know whether (according to reason of State) they might not overmaster us, if they should make warre upon us, as 'tis likely they would. If it should be said, and concluded, that in such Case we would, and should enter into a league both Defensive, and Offensive with the *Hollanders*; and by that meanes be enabled to oppose the *French*. To this I answer, *that it is a question*. *First*, *whether, or no, the Hollanders would in such case break their league defensive, and offensive which they hold with the French, to joyn compact with us*: for it may be very likely, that they would not draw upon them, so neere, and powerfull an enemy; besides, they have of late beene ayded by the *French*, since they have in a manner beene quit by us: Moreover, *France* can live of it selfe without *Holland*, but *Holland* can scarce live without *France*; as having great store of Corne, wine, and salt, and Canvas from thence: *besides*, 'tis very likely, that the *Hollanders* would be content to subsist, and to inrich themselves by trade (as doe the *Venetians*) and so to live at peace with their neighbors: and to say that they would joyne with us meerly for Religions sake; it may seeme so to a weake *Opiniatist*, but never to an understanding *Statist*; who well knoweth that Religion is many times the pretended, but seldom the reall

reall Cause of warre, or leagues : and as for the *Hollanders*, I am of opinion, that they will never enter into warre, or league, meerly for Religion.

9 But grant that wee should enter into such a league with the Hollanders ; I conceive, notwithstanding that *France* (if it had but *Flanders* added to it) would be superior to them and us by land, & no whit inferiour by Sea ; for to say, that the French in respect of their numbers both of horse and foote, would not in such case as aforesaid, be masters of the field, were meerly to flatter our selves, and they that are masters of the field, will in time be masters of as many townes and forts as they can besiege, and encompass or block up by land, if such townes cannot otherwise be succoured by Sea ; and it may be even of them also : so that the Hollanders having their townes and Forts taken from them, would be inforsed to breake their league with us, and make their peace with the French : and if it should farther be said, that in such Case, we would not onely make a league with the Hollanders ; but also with other Princes, and States, who should assist us. I answer, that this bare saying, or supposition, must not goe for a maxime. For first, it must be considered that all Nations are most inclinable to them that can stand them in most stead ; now great Brittaine, for that it is an Island, can stand no Nation in any great stead, for the invasion of *France* (at leastwise by land) and that chiefly, because our shipping (if we should be masters of the Seas) could not transport over any great powers, both of horse and foot (especially of horse)

horse) to make a considerable Conquest in so large a *Continent*, as is *France*.

10 Nor is it consequence to say, that formerly we have made Conquests in *France*, with a small power. For 1. it must be considered, that the Nature and Discipline of warre is greatly altered. Secondly, we then had a third part of *France*, or rather more under our obedience, having not now one foote within the maine Land. Thirdly, *France* had then many *Homagers* and *Peeres*, that durst, were able, and did oppose the King; so that, by that meanes it was disunited; whereas now, there is none of any *Potency* that dare controle the King, or his commands; or if there be, yet can they not but quickly be reduced into subjection, or else expelled as Fugitives, *France* being now wholly under obedience. Fourthly, it must likewise be considered, that the *Forts*, *Ports*, and *Citadels* of *France* were not then so strong, as now they are, being now all for the Major part, re-edified according to moderne Fortification. Fifthly, the Revenues of the Crown of *France*, are far greater then ever they were, as aforesaid, the Revenues of *Normandy* alone, equalizing now the revenues antient, of the whole crown, whereby the King of *France* is inable to leavy, and maintaine greater Armies: to all this may be added our long easse (a great Disease I feare) by which wee are of late become unexpert, to attempt any notable designes against so potent a Nation, as is *France*.

11 So that for the reasons alleadged, we can not stand other Nations in any great stead, for the Invasion of *France*; and therefore 'tis to be thought, that the

the German Princes, as many as can stand us in any stead, would not decline from France, which doth & may availe them (especially if the *House of Austria* fall to decay) to incline to us, who can availe them but little ; and the Portugals (if they continne in a Kingdome independent from *Spaine*) will, in any occasion of great importance , either wholly devote themselves to France (for that it may assist them against the Castilians, as likewise for Corne, Canvas, &c.) or else the *Portugals* will remaine Newtrals: as for *Spaine* (if they should lose Flanders) they would find enough to doe, to keepe themselves in safetey on the other side of the Pyrenans ; and besides, they will conceive, it may be , that for as much as we never throughly assisted them in their Countries of Flanders, &c. that therfore they were no way obliged afterwards to ingage themselves for us ; and besides (Flanders once lost) they were not able to doe us any great good ; no more were *Italy*, *Denmarke*, *Poland*, and *Suedeland* in respect of their remotenesse ; and it is most probable also , that those Nations would remaine as Newters betweene the French and us.

So that if France should gaine Flanders, and then fall out with us, 'tis to be feared, that the warre once turned upon us, would come wholly to our shares to beare, and make an end of ; and in such case, I hope all will agree that it were very necessary , that all our Ports, and places of importance, were strongly fortified, and securely guarded : and surely it can not be amisse to foresee, and prevent inconveniences by

times, and indeed I conceive it now even high time to be looked unto; for albeit that the *French* have not as yet wholly subdued *Flanders*, yet are they in a reasonable forwardnesse, & possibility of gaining it but letting that passe to take the event of warre; admit now the French should make a peace or Truce with the Spanish, who (by reason of their many, and great troubles) would tis very probable (before all were lost in Flanders) be glad to embrace Peace or Truce; and forasmuch as the *French* are on the winning hand, tis very likely therefore, that they would capitulate for their owne advantage: let it therefore be supposed, that it should be concluded betweene the *French* and *Spanish*, in a present Truce; that neither should ayd, or assist the enemies of one another during the time of such peace or Truce; which condition I beleive the *Spaniards* would not refuse if it were urged; because they would not have the *Portugals*, *Catalonians*, and such like aided against themselves: if therefore such Truce (as aforesaid) were made between those two *Nations*, suppose the *French* should even now turne their furies & ambition upon us, were it not then most requisite, that all our Ports, and places of Importance were securely guarded, and strongly fortifyed?

13. If it be said, that we would be Masters of the Sea, and by that meanes we should be able to divert any of the *French* forces, and not suffer them to land. I answer, that first it is a question whether we could master the *French* at sea, as they may be provided, and I beleive, if the *Hollanders* (being now in a league

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Defensive, and offensive with them) would joynt with them, wee should bee deceived, and it would be well for us to be equall with them ; but admit we should be equall, or somewhat Superior to the *French at sea* ; what great security could be built upon that : they may draw (if they finde themselves too weak) our ships of warre into one place, by daring us, and making shew of a Conflict with their ships, and yet with lesser vessels land an Army, or forces in another place, and there surprize some convenient Port, Towne, or Castle, if not sufficiently fortifyed, and strengthned to make resistance ; and how many times have weak places bin suddenly subdued, to the great prejudice of the owners, experience hath shewed to the ruine of many ; on the other side strong places (if not betrayed or most negligently kept) have many times foyled an enemy , and secured a whole Province ; for no enemy (except of an invincible power) will returne farre into anothers Country, leaving a strong place behind him, to which his enemies may assemble, and joyne themselves against him to make head, and if not fight with him afterwards, yet cut off his succours, and Convoyes, by the helpe of such a place, thereby, by little and little weakening, and dis- enabling him. If it bee farther said, that we need not feare an *Invasion* from *France*, or any other *Nation* ; and consequently need not erect any strong Forts, for that a puissant Army of aboye 20000. 30000. or 40000. at the most, cannot be by shipping transported, or landed in this *land*, and as for such powers our trained, or Military bands (with other forces soon

raised) would be able to overthrow them. *J answer to this*, that 'tis not good to put such a thing to hazard; for (to omit the danger of Combines, &c.) Although I grant our trained, or Military bands to be a very good meanes (I even the best we now have) to preserve us, and to supprese an enemy: yet so far as much as they are used to fight in jest, not in earnest, they might be foyled by lesser powers of old souldiers: such as now are the French, throughly exercised in the warres of Germany, Italy, Spaine, and the Low-Countries: so that I conceive and conclude how soever, that our Ports, and places of importance are (notwithstanding of our Fleet, & trained Bands) to be strongly secured.

14. It may be some will say, that there is no great feare that the French will at any time molest us, but let such give me leave to tell them, that I could wish it so, as well as they, and that all the world would, if it might be, live and continue in peace, and unity; nor doe I for my part accuse, or say, that the French will, or have an intent to make warre upon us; yet I verily beleieve, I know, that

1. *The French, in generall, envy our Kings Title to France.*

2. *That they beare unto us, old, and late Grudges for our Ile of Rey's Voyage.*

3. *That they desire to be the chiefe (if they can, the sole) Regents in Christendome; and therefore seeke wholly to disinvest the house of Austria, that none should be able to oppose them.*

4. *That they have set at variance, the Princes of Germany, and fomented the warres there, to the ruine, and in a manner Desolation thereof.*

5. *That*

5. That they have seized upon the Duke of Lorraines Country, and other places not belonging to them.

6. That they have reduced Savoy into the Nature of a fassallage, and thereby opened a way into Italy.

7. That they have animated the ~~Rebellions~~ of Catalonia, and such like.

8. That their Cardinall (who is upon the matter, their Dominus fac totum) is a most politick Prelate, &c.

Now therefor, if in zeale to my Country, I doe but suspect the worst (not insisting upon it vehemently) I conceive, I may be by all indifferent men excused. Notwithstanding, I request all (especially my ~~superiors~~) to pardon, if I have inserted any thing amisse; hoping, that what I have written concerning Fortifications, or the Fortifying Ports, and other places of importance, will worthily be taken into consideration. For as 'tis trueley said, that the Earth is

Ponderibus librata suis.

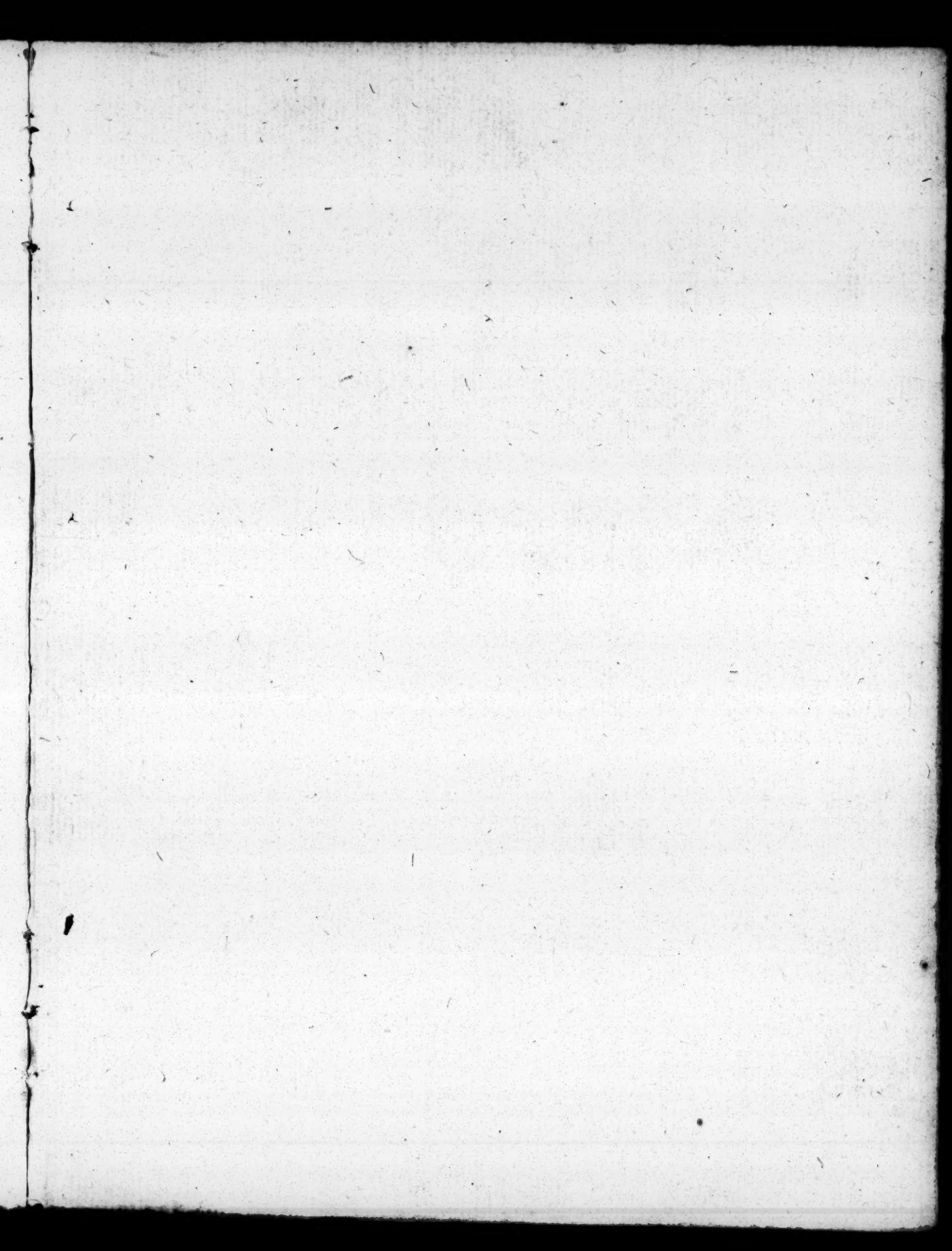
So may it be as trueley said, that a Kingdom or Common-wealth is (or ought to be) by Justice, and Warlike power equally balanced.

1. **I**f it be objected, that the Fortifying, and maintaining of places of Importance will bee somewhat chargeable to the Kingdome. I answer, beeter some charge, then no security, or safety.

2. If it be objected, that Forts, and strong places, have divers times bin, and may be yet the ~~Neets~~ of Rebels: I answer, that such Care, Policy, and Vigilancy, may be used in placing, and displacing Gouvernours, and Officers, as that we may bee as well secured from such dangers, as are the Spanish, Dutch, Venetian, and of late, the French, with other Nations.

3. If it be farther objected, that strong places (if once surprised by an enemy) are with greater difficulty regained, whereas weaker places are soone got againe. I answer, that stronger places likewise, are better able to keeps out an enemy: so that they cannot but by more difficulty be Conquered, and weaker (if they once come into the hands of an enemy) will be by them made strong, if they intend farther to invade; so that the recovering of a weake place soone lost, may cost as deare, as of a stronger.

FINIS.



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